THE PRESIDENT'S OWN

Lieutenant Colonel Jason K. Fettig, Director

Saturday, July 19, 2014 at 7:30 P.M.
Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall and Arts Center
Northern Virginia Community College
Alexandria Campus
Lieutenant Colonel Jason K. Fettig, conducting

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–91) — Adagio and Fugue in C minor, K. 546

Dmitri Shostakovich (1906–75)
orchestrated by Rudolf Barschai

Chamber Symphony, Opus 110a (1967)
(after String Quartet No. 8 in C minor, 1960)

Largo
Allegro molto
Allegretto
Largo
Largo

INTERMISSION

Jean Sibelius (1865–1957)
orchestrated by the composer

Impromptu for String Orchestra
(after Impromptus for Piano, Opus 5, Nos. 5 and 6)

Mieczyslaw Karlowicz (1876–1909)

Serenade for String Orchestra, Opus 2

March
Romance
Waltz
Finale

The United States Marine Band performs Wednesdays at 8 P.M. on the lower west terrace of the U.S. Capitol and Thursdays at 8 P.M. at the Sylvan Theater on the grounds of the Washington Monument through August 28, 2014.

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PLEASE NOTE: The use of recording devices and flash photography is prohibited during the concert.

PROGRAM NOTES

Adagio and Fugue in C minor, K. 546

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–91)

Since the fourteenth century, musicians have used the term "fugue," derived from Latin words meaning "flight" and "chase," to refer to music in which multiple voices follow each other in imitation. Today, any reference to the term brings with it the shadow of Johann Sebastian Bach, who brought the fugue to unprecedented levels of popularity in the eighteenth century with his keyboard works, including *The Well-Tempered Clavier* and *The Art of Fugue*.

Interest in the fugue as an independent genre dwindled with the Classical era's lyrical melodies and expanded forms. However, fugal sections within movements of larger works remained prevalent and they arguably constitute some of the greatest moments of music from this time, such as the finale of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's *Jupiter* Symphony (1788). The Adagio and Fugue in C minor, K. 546, written just months after *Jupiter,* holds a unique place in Mozart's extensive compositional output as his only original prelude and fugue for strings. The piece adds an expressive Adagio prelude to material Mozart borrowed from his Fugue in C minor for Two Pianos, K. 426, from 1783.

During the early 1780s, Mozart had been heavily engaged with the music of Bach and George Frideric Handel, arranging their works on behalf of patron Baron Gottfried van Swieten in Vienna, as well as incorporating their styles into his original compositions, including the Fugue in C minor. The later Adagio and Fugue for strings displays these layers of heritage beautifully: the earnest structure of Bach in Mozart's language of sparkling clarity and expressive lyricism, with textures broadening to culminate in symphonic grandeur.

Chamber Symphony, Opus 110a (1967)
(after String Quartet No. 8 in C minor, 1960)

Dmitri Shostakovich (1906–75)
orchestrated by Rudolf Barschai

Dmitri Shostakovich's personal and musical life was plagued by the repressive censorship of the communist Soviet regime. Like many other artists of the time, his creations were closely scrutinized using Vladimir Lenin's famous dictum "art belongs to the people." Shostakovich often was forced to either withhold compositions he suspected would not meet with government favor or conceal the true meaning of his work. Many times he narrowly avoided condemnation that certainly would have cost him his life. In 1936, an anonymous article entitled "Chaos Instead of Music" was released criticizing Shostakovich's new opera *Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District* for its explicitness and dissonance. He was denounced in 1948 by Joseph Stalin (along with other Russian composers including Sergei Prokofiev) for writing music that was "anti-democratic" and "alien to the Soviet people." In response, many Russian composers became increasingly cautious of what music they presented in public. Shostakovich's own works during that period were written with a dual meaning, one for public consumption and one that was masked, expressing the fear, pain, and sorrow that defined the times. He found success with the Soviet leaders in his Fifth Symphony—it was hailed a nationalistic triumph that celebrated the Russian spirit while its underlying themes of rebellion from hardship and oppression remained hidden deep within.

After Stalin's death in 1953, Shostakovich began to unravel his emotions freely through his music. No longer bound by fear, his works became increasingly honest and deeply personal. His String Quartet No. 8 is a stunning example of this and is the most often performed of his fifteen quartets. The work was composed in 1960 and is "dedicated to the victims of fascism and war." Every movement of the quartet is based entirely on a simple four-note motive (D–E-flat–C–B). These notes spell DSCH in German notation and form an anagram of Shostakovich's name, a musical signature he used in many of his works. Shostakovich also extensively quotes portions of many of his earlier works in this quartet. In addition to fragments from his first, fifth, tenth, and eleventh symphonies, there are bits from his opera *Lady Macbeth* and his Piano Trio No. 2.

The five movements of the quartet are performed without pause, but each movement forms its own distinct character. The first movement serves as a solemn prologue that sets the stage for the vicious allegro of the second movement to take over. The third movement is a waltz that is at the same time both humorous and sinister. The emotional climax of the work occurs in the fourth movement—a solo violin representing the composer cautiously waits behind a door as the ever-watchful government comes knocking. The fifth movement reprises material from the first, returning the whole piece to where it began. In a final tribute, the quartet concludes with a reference to an old song voiced by political prisoners: "When they enslave you and torture you, you are assured of honor in death." The quartet is a moving portrait of its composer, and to this day remains one of the most significant and stirring works in the repertoire. With the permission of the composer, Rudolf Barschai arranged the String Quartet No. 8 for full string orchestra and re-titled it Chamber Symphony.

Impromptu for String Orchestra (after Impromptus for Piano, Opus 5, Nos. 5 and 6)

Jean Sibelius (1865–1957)

Finnish composer Jean Sibelius dedicated his life's musical work to his native country. His music is saturated by the influence of Finland's language, traditions, and extensive folklore. Perhaps more significantly, however, his works reveal a much more organic connection to his homeland. Sibelius drew creative energy from the very soil of Finland; its mountains, rivers, valleys, and forests all contributed to his inimitable musical language. Although Sibelius' music ranges from hyper-conservative to, at times, startlingly modern, his works always seem to germinate from the sights, sounds, and smells of the natural world.

Sibelius entered university in Helsinki as a law student, but it quickly became apparent that music was his calling. He initially endeavored to be a violinist, but his natural abilities on the instrument were far surpassed by his talents in composition and he began serious study as a composer first in Helsinki and later in Berlin and Vienna. When Sibelius embarked on his career as a composer in earnest, he found immediate success in 1892 with his tone poem *Kullervo*, the first of many such works inspired by the legendary Finnish epic, the Kalevala. The following year, he composed a set of piano Impromptus, Opus 5, and these were the first to be published among many short piano works Sibelius composed throughout his career. Sibelius biographer Guy Rickards called these "one of [Sibelius'] most charming sets of piano pieces," and the collection has remained exceedingly popular with both professional and amateur pianists alike. The Fifth Impromptu is especially regarded as a miniature masterpiece and is firmly established in the repertoire of most Finnish pianists.

Sibelius did not compose any new music during the last twenty-five years of his life, yet he arranged several of his piano works for orchestra and often revisited other music he had composed many years prior. His Impromptu for String Orchestra is one such piece and cleverly combines the fifth and sixth piano pieces from the Opus 5 set, in E minor and E major respectively. The outer sections feature the noble and lyrical lines of the Fifth Impromptu, while the gentle waltz feel of the Sixth Impromptu serves beautifully as the central "trio" section of this creative synthesis. The music of the Sixth

Impromptu was also used in Sibelius' *Melodrama from 'Svartsjukans nätter' ('Nights of Jealousy')*, where it accompanies the text "if you once stood, shrouded in the misty haze, on the hilltop, in the spring morning's embrace…."

Serenade for String Orchestra, Opus 2

Mieczyslaw Karlowicz (1876–1909)

Mieczyslaw Karlowicz's musical star burned bright in his native Poland and beyond, although it was for too short of a time. Occupying the period in Polish classical music just after the great Frederic Chopin, Karlowicz showed tremendous talent at an early age and began to forge a promising career as a composer and conductor at the turn of the twentieth century. He was largely a Romantic, inspired by the works of Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky and Richard Wagner, yet his unique style was received with enthusiasm during the waning years of the Romantic period and the beginning of the monumental musical transformations that were occurring in the early 1900s. His superb violin concerto was written for and premièred by his former teacher Stanislaw Barcewicz and the Berlin Philharmonic under Karlowicz's baton in 1903.

Karlowicz was born into a noble Polish family. His father was a linguist and musician, and the younger Karlowicz studied violin as a child. He continued his education on both violin and in composition in Warsaw and later in Berlin with Heinrich Urban. Like Sibelius' Impromptus, Karlowicz's delightful Serenade for String Orchestra, Opus 2, comes from early in his career while he was still Urban's student. Interestingly, much of the music that survives from this time in his education consists largely of exercise pieces clearly assigned to him by his teachers. Many of these short pieces demonstrate a methodical work-through of different aspects of harmony, counterpoint, and orchestration. None carry an opus number, and it is clear that Karlowicz did not intend for them to be part of his official catalogue. These short and rather dry studies begin around 1898, yet the much more substantial and advanced Serenade dates from a year earlier.

One can only assume that Karlowicz was living two compositional lives; one as student, dutifully working his way through a curriculum prescribed by his mentors, and the other as an inspired musician writing music led solely by his muse and free of the bonds of academic rigor. In late 1896 and early 1897, an opportunity to explore this latter side of his work was indeed available. Toward the end of July in 1896, Karlowicz departed Berlin for a holiday to his home in Warsaw and soon became seriously ill with appendicitis. His recovery took some time and he did not return to his studies until January of the following year. Letters to friends indicate that this is the period within which his Serenade was born. Karlowicz was an experienced violinist and possessed excellent musical instincts. He would also have been well aware of the serenades of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Antonín Dvořák, Tchaikovsky, and Robert Volkmann, and had superb models as references for crafting his own opus. However its remarkable genesis came about, Karlowicz returned to school with his new Serenade in hand and dedicated it to his teacher. Urban conducted the première in Berlin for a small group of friends and family in April and the work entered the repertory. The four-movement structure of Karlowicz's Serenade mirrors those of the great composers, with a march and Romance, a waltz and a finale, but the similarities quickly dissolve beyond the titles. Karlowicz's music is entirely his own, and his take on familiar forms is both refreshing and ceaselessly optimistic throughout.

Karlowicz unfortunately did not live to fully realize his considerable musical talent, as he perished in an avalanche at the age of thirty-two while skiing in the Tatra mountains in 1909. To add to this tragedy, much of his music was lost during World War II. But what has survived—including the early Serenade—reveals a great young talent in the midst of one of the richest periods in music history.